

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 976

By White

A RESOLUTION to recognize Jimmy Wayne for his altruism and advocacy on behalf of foster youth in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting for this legislative body to especially recognize those persons who have extraordinary experiential knowledge that moves them beyond all reasonable expectations of advocacy and altruism for especially disadvantaged young people who face great challenges as they transition from adolescence into adulthood because they reach the age of majority as wards of the state and without legal and personal relationships with responsible and caring adults; and

WHEREAS, each year in Tennessee, approximately 650 young people who are wards of the State reach the age of majority and, without the guidance, support, and nurturance of caring adults in their lives, move forward into adulthood with excitement greatly tempered with anxiety and trepidation about facing and resolving challenges, securing residence, employment, basic sustenance, and generally establishing oneself to live self-sufficiently; and

WHEREAS, one individual who has been highly instrumental in heralding the unique and serious needs of foster youth is singer, songwriter, and Nashville resident Jimmy Wayne, who founded Project Meet Me Halfway as a focal point for awareness and advocacy of this target population; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wayne, having spent years of his own childhood and adolescence in the foster care system in North Carolina, knows ever so poignantly the plights and perils that prematurely befall youth whose families and support systems simply erode away from underneath them; and

WHEREAS, on January 1, 2010, Mr. Wayne left Nashville on foot, destination Phoenix, Arizona, as he embarked on a genuine portrayal of the daunting and almost insurmountable

obstacles fledgling adults face when their eighteenth birthday comes and goes. On August 1st of that same year, he crossed his finish line some 1,700 miles west of home, vowing to continue the work to eradicate homelessness among young people who age out of the foster care system; and

WHEREAS, a tireless advocate during the 2012 regular session of the General Assembly, Mr. Wayne has spoken candidly about his experiences and repeatedly and successfully made the case for extending foster care services to youth up to age twenty-one, if they so choose, in order that they might have stability in their basic life domains while they pursue technical or university education, secure gainful employment, and establish households for themselves; and

WHEREAS, it is noble and good that estimable persons such as Jimmy Wayne give of their precious time and renown celebrity to harken matters centrally important to the very health, safety, and well being of those among us in need of support and attention so that they, too, can overcome adversities and reach their full potential as model Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, the extraordinary efforts of Mr. Jimmy Wayne are worthy and deserving of the appreciation of this body, and it is with sincere gratitude that we acknowledge the wise and heartfelt counsel that has been rendered to us by this fine Tennessean; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby thank Mr. Jimmy Wayne for availing himself to us as a forthright advocate and source of wise counsel during this legislative session. We extend to him our best wishes in aiding youth aging out of the foster care system and wish him all success in his musical career.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.